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Subject: Testimony Against Evil.

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PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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TESTIMONY AGAINST EVIL.

"Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good."—ROM. XII., 9.

There is a coördination here. We are neither to be satisfied with hating evil, nor with loving that which is good. We are to do both. They stand in this intimate relation with each other, and are tests each of the other's genuineness, in that each begets the other. If a man hates evil, and it is a genuine moral revulsion, it will show itself to be genuine, among other ways, by this, that it will be accompanied by, or will have as its alternative, a strong attraction toward that which is good. On the other hand, if a man supposes that he loves that which is good, and springs to it with appetite and desire, he may test the reality and genuineness of that loving by the corresponding emotion—the abhorrence of its opposite.

It seems impossible that the soul should not act in this way. If it love concord, it must revolt at discord. So that these two phases are counterparts. One is the fulfillment of the other. A man who loves the truth must hate lies. A man who is sensitive to honor, must have great revulsion from everything that is dishonorable. A man that really loves purity, must really abhor impurity. If a man's heart goes out toward fidelity, he must have a great hatred of treachery. It seems impossible that the mind should act in any other way.

This is very strong language. *Abhor*—there is no stronger word than that in our tongue; and it does not strain the original at all. It is justified. And, on the other hand, *cleave* is an equally strong word. As a mother puts her arms around about the child in the moment of love, in the gush of affection, and holds it fast, so that nothing can get it away, and her clasp is a clasp of retention, so when we are commanded to "cleave to that which is good," it is as if it were said, "Love that which is good; hold it fast in your arms; do not let it be taken away from you. Both of these are pretty strong expressions, because the things that they mean are pretty strong, too: for intensiveness is the typical idea of Christian experience. Because there are in the New Testament such words as *mildness*, and *gentle*-

ness, and meekness, a great many persons think that Christian character means a sort of pale, pulseless state of mind—a transparent nothingness—a bland emotion—a state that is like glass, which has no particular quality of its own—something that you can look through. But no; the typical idea of Christian experience is that of depth of power, preëminently. We are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and our neighbor,—not with a little gentle well-wishing, not with a little superfluous generosity after we have taken care of ourselves,—but *as* ourselves. It is a Lordly conception that comes into the idea of duty in the Christian life—something of largeness, and of power; so that when we love that which is good, we love it with vigor; and when we hate that which is evil, we hate it with thunder and lightning!

To be sure, we make allowance for men who cannot rise up to that; but we do not take them for our models. A man may be a Christian without any great power of hating; without any great power of loving; without any great power in his being, at any rate. But he is a babe; he is a child; and that is not the typical idea. We take the Bible notion of Christians. It is a thing of proportion. As we have power of excitability, and power of intense emotions, one way or another; as we have fervidness; or the power of burning, in our feelings, we are thereby brought into line with the typical Christian. So that we are to have the most vigorous likes and dislikes. *Likes* are not strong enough. We are to have the most vigorous *loves* and *hatreds* for things moral or immoral, as the case may be.

We are not, though, to suppose that this exhortation gives us the liberty to hate evil men. We are to hate *evil*. We are to abhor it. We read in the Scriptures, *Ye that love the Lord hate evil*; but nowhere, from the beginning to the end of the Bible is there an exhortation to hate wicked men. On the other hand, God, that is of *purser eyes than to behold iniquity*; whose fury against wickedness *burns to the lowest hell*, so far from hating men, loves them with an unutterable love—loves them with a love which could have been signified by nothing less than the death of Christ—the most stupendous exhibition of sacrifice and witness of affection that could be raised up in the circle of human experience and knowledge. And we are not to suppose, because we are commanded to abhor evil, that therefore we have a right to curse and swear at all wicked men, and hurl our denunciations at them. Far from it. Hate evil; but it is quite possible for a man at the same time to be full of sympathy and yearning toward men who are committing evil. There are none who know how to hate evil so much as those who love good. The largest love takes everything unto itself; it has pride in the object loved, and is made happy by

seeing the object of love beautiful, noble, excellent; and it is wounded by seeing the opposite qualities. There is nothing so sensitive to blemish, to disfigurement, to unsymmetry, as the truest love. A mother who loves the child may mask his faults, and may soften them, from the very pain that the recognition of them gives; but when she does discern a sin, a wasting and withering wickedness in the child, there is no one who abhors that evil so much as she. A mother's abhorrence of evil in her child is in the proportion of her love for that child.

Do you suppose there is any human being who hates drunkenness as much as the wife does, who cannot give up the husband of her youth. All her being is centered in him. All her early hope, all her love, went out unto him. She holds him with cords that neither life nor death can break. And yet, he is a drunkard. And if there is anything in this world that typifies hell, it is a pure and noble woman sleeping in the arms of a drunken husband. Is there anyone who does so abhor the passion and the evil as she who would lay her life down, if she could redeem him from it?

We are not, therefore, to suppose that because we are commanded to abhor evil, we are commanded to hate bad men, or to abhor them.

Men should have a clear and positive revulsion from evil for their own protection. It is not safe, considering what the nature of evil is, how it is graded, how it springs out of things that are not evil, or how it becomes so by circumstances, to look upon it with allowance. The power that evil has of masking itself, the power that it has of becoming beautiful, renders it the more dangerous. The fact that much in this life is an amalgam, made up of gold and base metal together; that good and evil are twined and plied together so that we are constantly in danger of taking the one for the sake of the other—these things require that a man who means to live a truly manly Christian life—a life of manhood in Christ Jesus being the highest type or conception of manhood—must train himself to abhor what is evil, or he will, in the adulterations of things, find himself drawn insensibly along, little by little, little by little. Plausible lies, and oblique deceits, and reflected dishonesties, and semi-transparent wickednesses—the thousand gradations on the scale—will lead him step by step, so that, if he have not a sovereign revulsion from wickedness, before he is aware he will have become an apologist for it, if not a partaker of it.

Such is the nature of the stomach that whatever things are revolting to it, it rejects. It throws them off spontaneously, and so saves itself. Yet it is quite possible for one, by minute tastes, to accustom himself to take arsenic, tartar-emetic, things the most destructive to the animal tissue and to all the functions of the prime organs; it is

quite possible for one, little by little, to keep on in such a course until he has medicated himself into a certain tolerance of things that are fundamentally injurious to his health and to his life. And as it is in physical things, so is it in moral. One may, by gradations of wickedness, by not looking at it with horror in its initial forms, in its slightest developments, as it were tone down his conscience, and bring it more and more to the level of wickedness, until it shall lose its sensibility and its power of discerning.

A great many men are wicked because they have not the sensibility that interprets to them what is the better; and a great many men are untrue and false because they have a blunt conscience, that does not discern that which is bad.

That power by which we quickly scent wickedness; by which we reject it, and lift ourselves above all its entanglements, and its fine threads, is this hating it—this abhorrence of it.

A good practical musician may stand in the midst of five hundred singers, and if there is one false voice in the whole five hundred, his ear hates discord so that he knows it. There may not be anyone else in the house who knows that there is a single voice below the pitch, or above the pitch, and he, perhaps, cannot tell where the trouble is, or just what it is; but he feels it.

It might be so with a man's conscience. He ought, as it were, to feel a discord in the chorus, a lowering of the tone, somewhere, which shall indicate at once that there is something wrong, even when it requires thought and analysis to detect what the wrong is. This refinement ought a Christian to reach for his own sake. Still more ought he to do it for the sake of the witness which every one owes to goodness, and against evil. For, we are "the light of the world" in proportion as we are enlightened by Christ. Good men are "the salt of the earth." Society defends itself by its hating power; and society is to be taught how discreetly to hate evil by the witness and testimony of Christian men.

There is a public sentiment in ordinary communities which sends crimes and vices into the shadow, so that wickedness of certain grades has to skulk. It is a sorrowful thing when crimes become tolerable, and when vices become respectable. The average conscience of any community must be deteriorated very much before men who are notorious for their various wickednesses can walk in the high places, and can be regarded as "hail fellows well met," and be permitted to hold the principal offices of trust and profit, and be honored and smiled upon, and everywhere greeted and recognized. A scoundrel, if he be clothed with king's robes, ought to be treated by every good man as if he were a scoundrel, so far as that is his typical character, and so far

as he puts that character out. You may pity him; you may labor for his reclamation; but if he is placed in such circumstances that he is represented by wicked conduct or by wicked actions, somewhere there must be a testimony of such horror and hatred of his wickedness that he shall be made to feel how hateful wickedness is. And the public sentiment of society ought to be made to feel how hateful wickedness is. If there is no reprobation of counterfeiting; if honest men, who never would counterfeit, still are charitable to take counterfeit money; if though they think it bad, and say that they would not take it if they could very well help it, they yet, when they have it in their hands will pass it along—then it will be sure to thrive. If men who are known to be genial, good fellows, and who are respected in the community, should say of counterfeiting, "It is bad, but there are worse things than that in society," what would become of our trust and security in regard to any circulating medium? But honest men hate counterfeiting. They frown upon all the spurious money which comes under their notice; and the result is that it has to sneak and go through society in the lowest channels, and the best way it can. But if there were no public sentiment, if there were no indignation of honesty, if there were no real honor that met this thing and frowned upon it, it would rise up at once. Wickedness in society is all the time seeking to gain ascendancy; and there is nothing to keep it down but that hatred of it which the educated conscience of society gives. How far up the common sewers of society shall rise, and how fast they shall send out their miasma, depends upon the education of the conscience of the Christian community. And a community that has been brought up to be tolerant of wickedness, or to find excuses for it, or to be indifferent to it, or to be good-natured over it, becomes a patron of wickedness, and demoralizes and weighs down that which God sent the Church and the Christian community to enlighten and to lift up.

I say that we are to abhor, and that our abhorrence is to be a very strong feeling. Some may be led to infer from this that when a man abhors evil he is to be harsh with it; that he is to talk loud against it; that he is to use violent language toward it; that he is to be intensely severe and unmeasured in dealing with it; that he is to tread it down ruthlessly. But that does not follow. A man may abhor evil and be very mild. A man may abhor evil and be silent. A man may abhor evil and be perfectly self-possessed and serene.

The single look of grief and surprise with which a pure and noble woman meets some unexpected trait of wickedness in her husband, is to him like Mount Sinai, and all its thunders. It is often said that the woman is the man's conscience. A great nature is often the conscience of a smaller nature. Where two natures are at all equally mated and

paired, they are a conscience to each other, reciprocal and intersphering. But how often has a man in the presence of a virtuous wife or of a pure and noble mother, been struck through with a sense of wickedness by a single expression from her in respect to certain unlawful courses of his! There is nothing which makes wickedness seem so wicked as to bring it into the presence of its opposite, as embodied in a great nature. A person may abhor wickedness, and be very gentle, very mild, very sweet-spoken. One may have an abhorrence of wickedness that shall be like a spear perpetually, and yet be full of love, full of sympathy, full of goodness. It is not so much the rash, harsh, violent expression, that is called for, as it is that deep loathing, that settled aversion of the soul to all that is known and recognized to be evil. What is wanted, therefore, is positiveness of the whole strength of feeling—not violence of expression.

In this way, by the expression of its hatred, of its abhorrence, the Christian Church educates the community, cleanses its opinions, elevates its judgments, and redeems it from the perils which always are burrowing at the bottom of human life. But in order to do this, one must have a discriminating judgment and an educated conscience.

If a man should carry this idea of abhorring evil into all the little mistakes in life, he could commit no greater error. One of the great mistakes of Christendom is that it recognizes so many sins that are purely artificial, conventional, such as a man may commit without affecting his spiritual nature; and that it prescribes so many observances which, so far as a man's spiritual nature is concerned, it makes no difference whether he keeps or not. As matters of agreement between man and man, they may have some value; but further than that they are not essential. And yet, there are some persons who will visit with frowns and indignations a man who breaks a saint's day; while if he equivocates, as society allows persons to equivocate, dextrously and adroitly, they do not so much as rebuke him. We all of us think that a ragged beggar's lie is a grossly wicked lie; but a lie clothed in king's garments, a lie that shines, a lie that is witty, a lie that sparkles with intellection, men do not think is so very bad. They would burn a man who did not keep Sunday, and yet, they will not touch a man when he tells a smart lie. But the truth, which is the basis of confidence and trust between man and man, should be as pure as crystal. A man may be given over to his passions and appetites, he may be avaricious, he may be selfish, he may have the cruelty of pride, and still not be severely judged by his fellows. Men seldom visit things with the same condemnation that they do the violation of the conventional laws and rules and regulations of society—which are not without their value, which I do not deprecate nor depreciate, but which are not essential.

Now, I say, that if we are going to abhor evil, we must separate evil from mere conventional sins, and discriminate between them. Those things must be looked upon and treated as evil which the universal conscience recognizes as being wicked. On them must be put the signet of reprobation. While we are not blind to all milder evils, we cannot afford to lose the emphasis of our abhorrence by distributing it to everything alike. As if a man that has a dirty collar must be treated as if he had a dirty character! As if a man whose hands are unclean, and whose nails are unshorn, must be treated as if his heart were black with lecherous thoughts! As if a man that is coarse in his manners, must be treated as if he were coarse in his morals! It is the beast that is in men; it is the belluine appetites; it is the passions which are destructive to peace and happiness—it is these that we must intensify our abhorrence of. We cannot, therefore, afford to spread out our horror over all the little pecadillos and infirmities and nibbles and bites which come up in ecclesiastical orderings. It is the antagonist of love—it is selfishness, in all its moods and broods—that we must abhor.

There are certain things in which this may receive a closer application, and in which an application is very much needed.

In the first place, Christians—Christian men and Christian women; young men and maidens; all—ought to feel that they are called to witness their abhorrence in all the evil processes of society. There is a great deal that is allowed in society, that is tolerated there, although everybody admits that it is wicked. Society is full of permissions. It nests and burrows envies, and jealousies, and hatreds, and slanders; malignant, various and most excoriating vices of the passions, there are in society. And it is the duty of every man and every woman to set their faces against these things, wherever they happen to be—no matter if they *are* in respectable circles. You are a servant of the Lord, and you are all to be tuned by His grace, and not by the tuning-fork of custom or fashion. Wherever you go, whatever thing is to your judgment and conscience abhorrent you are to frown upon. I do not say that at all times and under all circumstances you are to speak of all the evil that you see; but you are never to allow yourself for one single moment to be on its side. Somehow or other every person in life ought to make his mark so that everybody shall know where he stands on the subject of tattling; of backbiting; of slandering; of tale-bearing; of eating and drinking his fellow-men. Society is full of cruelty. Doré's hideous pictures from Dante in which men are represented as gnawing skull bones in the infernal regions; in which men are represented as feeding off from their victims—these are enough to shock us, and drive us from all pictorial illustrations of that kind; but, after

all, we see these things in life. There is cannibalism around about us all the time and everywhere. Not a bird's leg is taken up and counted a more delicious morsel, and is more deliberately picked and chewed and relished in all its juices, than a person's reputation is taken up, and cut, and bitten, and sucked dry, and cast out. It is wicked; it is damnable; it is treason to man and treason to God; and yet such things are common. Why! men will not carry vermin on their heads nor on their bodies. Perfumed society—it would reject a poor miserable wretch that came into it! Yet men carry vermin in their souls, crawling and creeping all over them. But because they wear fine clothes and are very wealthy, or are in official positions, they are tolerated. And it is high time that men should learn to discriminate and hate these feculent vices of detraction, and bitterness, and envy, and jealousy—all those elements which spring from the lower regions, and which are of the evil spirit, can be made sacred in your eyes by the fact that they are permitted! But God ought to be greater than man; and the absolute truth of God ought to be more than the permissions of human society or the legislation of public sentiment.

That which is true in society ought also to be true in pleasure. What we need now in life, above everything else, is Christian men who take the lead in manly pleasures, and make them honorable and noble. Pleasure is of God. So is suffering. Joy and sorrow are both of them born of God. There is a manly way of enjoying one's self which is not only permissible, but most wholesome, and, in moral things, most beneficial. Let men be free to take all rational amusement, free to take joy, and that abundantly; and yet the moment pleasure, and its permissions, become soiled or even sullied, let men turn away from them, and scorn them, and loathe them, so that the world, looking on them, shall see that they are "men of pleasure," not in the sense that they are men of no conscience, but in the sense that they are men of eminent conscience.

All through society, the moment anything becomes pleasant, wicked men seem to gain ascendancy in it. Is it a joyous thing for men to sail their yachts? Speedily yachting falls into the hands of men who make it a round of dissipation. A yacht life is a life of Sodom, often. And it is a shame! Are athletic and exciting games wholesome and enjoyable? Speedily they fall into the hands of men who make them instruments of betting and cheating and stealing—for men that bet and cheat are gamblers, for the most part; and a gambler will steal if he has a chance, the world over, if you give him impunity and temptation enough. And so they are to be disallowed. Ten-pins and billiards—athletic games full of stimulus, and pleasure, and health—how quick they slip out of the hands of pure men into the hands of men that are

corrupt! What we need in society is men who shall assert the importance of exercise, and the law of manly pleasure—men that shall be free and bold, and that shall at the same time have eyes of flame, and hearts of purity, and shall drive away from the realm of pleasure all that is unmanly and unclean, and keep it away.

We need, also, in business, men of the same stamp; for business, while it is essentially founded on equity, while nothing is more equitable than its law of commerce or exchange, has in its actual conduct ten thousand pressures and influences which are evil in their tendency. Business is full of allowed wickedness. And there be many weak souls that, coming down into business, first stand silent, and then gradually lose susceptibility to things that are wrong, and finally begin to indulge in them a little in a cowardly way, and at last lose all conscience, and all faith in goodness in those directions, and plunge in boldly. And one upright, sagacious, successful man, that is all the time bearing witness to truth, to fidelity, to honor; one man standing up immaculate in the midst of men all around about him, and representing the superiority of virtue over vice, is a missionary. I think there are single men in Wall-street who do a thousand times more to create an abhorrence of evil than a hundred pulpits. And wherever a man feels himself to be a Christian, it is his business to carry this sense of honor—this discrimination between things right and wrong—and be ready to refuse peremptorily whatever violates his principles, and stand up for that which is true and right and pure, though he stands alone. And he need not blush because he is in the minority; for God stands behind any man who is standing up for a principle, or for a truth.

We need also to have testimony more and more as against gilded wickedness. And here I can give no better illustrations than those found in the realm of literature; although, in saloons, and in the various circles of higher life, there is much of wickedness gilded by genius. There is a popular impression that if a man has genius, it sanctifies anything that he may do—that is to say, if God gives a man ten talents, though he violate every one of them, he is not thought to be so wicked a man as a man who, having but one, violates that. Public sentiment exactly reverses the law of accountability as laid down in the New Testament. I hold that the man who is the most highly endowed has the most responsibility. God demands more, and society ought to demand more of him than of persons who are less highly endowed. Higher standards of conduct should be set up, and a purer life required, in proportion as men go up. There are no criminals like the unvulgar. There are no criminals like the men who think the furthest and the most brilliantly. And those men whom God has endowed with genius,

and who fill literature with salacious images and with music, so that the corruptest sentiments take on the choicest language and move in the most beauteous numbers, are satanic men, who put wreaths about their head; but every leaf will distil damnation, when God shall call them into judgment. There is no wickedness like that which is committed by genius, and committed in such a way that men are caught through their taste, through their intellect, through their appetites, through their nobler sentiments, and carried down to degradation, and to lust, and to destruction.

That is the peculiar trouble with the whole French school of reformatory novels. I am sorry to see, in places where I should not have expected to find it, approbation of George Sand's works, and a beginning to publish them in our language. Here is a woman of genius ridiculing in her works the sacredness of the marriage relation, in favor of a sort of ideal marriage relation which she thinks is still higher. Endowed with a marvelous power in literature, her whole temper and personal magnetism is in favor of unvirtue. But we do not need French morality in Anglo Saxon communities. It may be good reformation in Paris, but it is poor reformation here. There is Eugene Sue, and Dumas, and Victor Hugo, and a host of names with which, fortunately, I am not enough familiar to call off at hap-hazard, whose works, it seems to me, can only be read by morbid anatomists of literature. They are bad for the young, and there ought to be an emphasis against them in society, and in Christian families. Christian writers and teachers ought to denounce them, and bear testimony against them, such as to prevent their currency. It is said, "It will make people read them more." Yes; but it will make them read as criminals, and not as respectable men. The moment a man puts a book in his pocket, and reads it by stealth, it has gone out of the range in which it is liable to do much harm. The moment a book is made disreputable, so that persons who read it have to do it by stealth in order to keep respectable, they have lost much of their power for evil. Common literature is becoming more mighty than any other; more mighty than the sword or the purse; and the world is coming more and more under the dominion of it. And there need to be Christian legislation, a Christian public sentiment, and Christian canons of judgment; and nowhere more than just there is it necessary that men should be trained to abhor evil, no matter how gilded or beautiful, or musical. It is all the worse if it is beautiful. Poison disguised is no less poison, but it is more likely to be taken.

And lastly, men must bear a testimony, in such a nation as this, that shall be felt perpetually on the subject of political wickedness. Men who are in high places form a kind of public sentiment; they

separate themselves from the mass of men for the time being, and so, too often, they lose sensibility to the general public sentiment. We do wrong to ourselves, to our children, and to the commonwealth, when we permit wickedness in high places to go unrebuked. It ought to be rebuked in the pulpit, in the street, on the exchange, everywhere. When men have done wickedly; when they have done those things which touch the foundation of morality, unless they repent and turn away from their wrong courses, they ought not to be encouraged by even your social recognition. I know of men that I would not accept an introduction to. I could not consent to put myself on terms of equality with them. I would go to them as I would go to a man under sentence of death, to win him to repentance; I would go to them as a minister, and a missionary; I would go to them, if peradventure I might pluck them *as brands from the burning*; but where it is a question of social equality, I could not consent to stand side by side with them, and have it supposed that I regarded them on a level with a Christian man and gentleman. Such things are guarded in some nations where there are ranks and orders of nobility, but there is no such thing as that with us. There is in a democracy but one thing that can save us, and that is the aristocracy of Christian virtue. And the light of the heart of Jesus shining on things permitted, and on things not permitted, is to be our guide. And the business of the Church is to raise up a testimony that shall make itself felt, and that shall keep up the distinction between good and evil, right and wrong, selfishness and benevolence, so that no man can go to the one side or to the other without knowing it. That is what is meant by being "the light of the world." It is not that we are to preach doctrine—though that comes in incidentally; but that we are to make the lines and land-marks so clear that they cannot be removed by mistake, but only by malice pre-pense. So the Church will become more and more an ensample and witness, and more and more an encourager. And it will require some courage, especially for the young, and, for that matter, for the old; it will require some courage for men who have not been very positive and decided, and for men whose interests frequently lead them to wink at things which are wrong—it will require some courage for them to become witnesses against evil. But what is your faith in Christ worth, what is your hope in Jesus worth, what is your belief in the life everlasting worth, what is your confidence in purity and in the sweetness of the heart of Christ borne into your heart worth, if they do not strengthen you to bear testimony to the right and against the wrong wherever you go. Wherever there is wickedness, somebody must abhor it; not clamorously; not vindictively; not harshly; but firmly. You must set over against the wickedness of this world its opposite—

purity and virtue; and with such emphasis that men shall see how lovely the one is, and how hateful the other is.

So, then, without urging you to become malignant reformers, or, still less, denouncers and destroyers, I would say, *Abhor, in all things, that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good.* And the harvest and fruitfulness and beauty of that good to which you cleave, and which you caress—that it is which shall make your testimony against evil medicinal, remedial, not poisonous.

May God grant that in that great conflict, whether silent or clamorous, which is going on between the power of light and the power of darkness, between purity and impurity, between selfishness and unselfishness, between divine virtue and infernal malignity, every one of us may bear the name of Christ, and may be found on the side of truth and of virtue and of piety, *abhorring that which is evil, and cleaving to that which is good*

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee, our Heavenly Father, led by thy hand; for Jesus is our Elder Brother. We know him; and in him we know thee. Yet, not as a stranger do we draw near to thee. We have come so often, thou hast made thyself through infinite condescension so gentle unto us, and so familiar, that we are as children coming home. We have brought so many wants in time of trouble; we have come weighed down with so many burdens, pierced with so many experiences, and tried by so many temptations, that we come with confidence. We have put thee to proof, and found thee doing exceeding abundantly more than we asked or thought; so that we come familiarly, most boldly, to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and help in time of need.

We thank thee that thou hast made this way so glorious to us that not men who love most, nor those who are strongest, are so much to us as thou art, that dwellest in silence. There is a strength of succor above the sight, and beyond our reach. All things and all men that work for us in this sphere below are influenced by thy gracious Spirit to do it. Thou art the Fountain and the source of all help. Our life is in thee. We live upon thy laws. We live in the secret searching providence which constantly limnates evil, and brings in good. We live by those powers in ourselves which burn only as thou pourest fuel upon them. All that we have had, we have had from thee. All that by which we are sustained is of thee. All the ends towards which we are pressing forward are marked out by thee. And we rejoice that when we sin, and fall into suffering, and into disgrace, it is of thee that we are restored. It is not what thou hast done, but what thou art that gives us hope. For thou hast disclosed the ineffable love of thy paternal heart to us. It is thy nature to forgive. It is thy heart's desire to cleanse. It is the peculiarity of thy holiness to nurse and patiently bring up holiness in others. And thou hast made it manifest in thy Son, and in his sacrifice, that sin is pardonable. And in him we have confidence as interpreting to us the whole glorious nature of a God who is willing to suffer rather than that we should suffer; of a God who would rather restore than punish; of a God who desires a remedy for sin, more than to crush it and make it final.

Thou, O Lord our God! dost behold the ineffable sinfulness of sin; and we are glad that it does not drive forth from thy heart flames that shall consume and devour the sinner; but that from thy heart come forth all the remedial tides of mercy and of love, that men may live, and be restored, and become trophies of thy redeeming grace.

And grant that our hearts may become like thine, that we too, may have great hatred for things unquitos; that we may abhor evil; that we may cleave to that which is good; and that we may be able to redeem men from evil, and, in a spirit of kindness, restore such as have gone astray.

And we pray thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all those who are laboring for the reclamation of men from evil; for the restoration of society to virtue and to purity; for the establishment of good morals; and for the inculcation of true piety. May they never grow weary or faint. Multiply the number of those that shall go forth as heralds of Christ to preach the Gospel, and the unsearchable riches thereof. We pray that thy kingdom may come everywhere, and that wickedness may flee away; and that all darkness, and selfishness, and cruelty, and ignorance, and superstition, and tyranny, may henceforth be cleansed, and that that joyful day of deliverance may come which is shouted alike by angels in heaven and saints upon earth.

And to thy name shall be the glory of this triumph, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wouldst bless the word of admonition. Grant that by the light of the Holy Spirit it may take possession of our understandings; and not only of our understandings, but of our will; and that it may come down into our life. So sanctify us and fill us with all goodness, that everywhere we go, even by our silent example, we shall be witnesses against evil. We pray for more and more power on the side of goodness. Behold thy cause. How it struggles, often overborne! How yet the prince of the power of the air carries with him fashion, and beauty, and all things that fascinate the fancy and the imagination. Lord God, we pray for the purification of life. We pray for the ennobling of men. We pray for the weakening of those that destroy, and of the strengthening of those that would build up. Let thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on the earth as it is in heaven. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

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